

*Isotetes Butleri*, Engelm., n. sp. See Bot. Gaz., Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 1.

Nearly all the species mentioned in the above list were verified by Dr. Geo. Engelmann.

[As we have, perhaps thoughtlessly, admitted to our pages articles not very complimentary to Mr. J. C. Arthur, it is but simple justice that the following answer be published.—Eds.]

AS REGARDS THE FLORA OF IOWA.—During the last year several articles\* have appeared in print derogatory to the exhibit of the Iowa flora, as shown by my pamphlet, entitled "Contributions to the flora of Iowa." It is due to myself, and to all who may have occasion to use the Catalogue, that these receive some notice.

In the BOTANICAL GAZETTE for October, 1877, is "An Explanation." It says there has been made "a very unfortunate mistake for the credit of our State Flora, on the part of the authors (it is incomprehensible how I can be spoken of in the plural number) of our Catalogue, who report only 979 plants, while our whole number must be twice as many." Then follows a disparaging comparison with the 2,034 species of the Nebraska Catalogue, in which there is no mention that the latter contains 363 cryptogams, a class of plants not included in the Iowa list. The writer is then charged with gross negligence in preparing the Catalogue, etc., etc.

The facts are these: In the preparation of the Iowa Catalogue no efforts were spared to make it as complete as possible. A tour of the State was made in order to

\*See Bot. Gaz. vol. 2, pp. 73, 107, 114 and 143; also Bull. Torr. Bot. Cl., March, 1878.

secure a personal consultation with every botanist and an examination of each herbarium then known to the writer. Moreover every precaution was taken to prevent mistakes in the determination. When the evidence of authenticity was not satisfactory, the locality was given in a foot-note, so as to hold the person reporting it responsible. Mere lists without the specimens received but little attention. Such a strict surveillance naturally excluded many names which might otherwise have been used. The object was to make a list of plants *known* to be growing in the State, and to exclude all others however *probable* it might seem that they were natives. Such has also been the aim in making the additions (published in the Proc. Dav. Acad. Nat. Sci.) to the Catalogue. In these addenda names have been expunged, changed, or added, as required by later information. Printed copies are distributed to all Iowa botanists and to such others as desire them.

As regards the method of publishing additions to the State flora, I cannot think that the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of the columns of botanical periodicals (better filled with other matter) for local floras, is at all conducive to accuracy. To make a short and clear proof of this statement, I have tabulated all the additions to the Iowa flora one person has published in this manner; and as this is done through no ill will, but with the best of intentions, all doubts in the discrimination have been resolved in his favor:

	BOT. GAZ. Jan. '77.	BOT. GAZ. June '77.	BOT. GAZ. Oct. '77.	TORR. BULL. Mar. '78.	Total.	Per cent.
Correct and subsequently published..	8	4	0	12	24	28
Correct but already published.....	3	0	0	21	24	28
Doubtfully determined.....	6	2	1	2	11	13
Incorrectly determined.....	5	5	4	4	18	21
Without the scope of the Catalogue..	5	1	1	1	8	10
Total.....	27	12	6	40	85	100

This shows that only 28 per cent. were *bona fide* additions, that an equal number should not have been published, over a fifth were incorrectly named, and 10 per cent. were of plants with which the Catalogue has nothing to do. Truthful information is earnestly desired, but such as the above table shows to have been published is misleading and worse than none.—J. C. ARTHUR, *Agricultural College, Ames, Iowa.*